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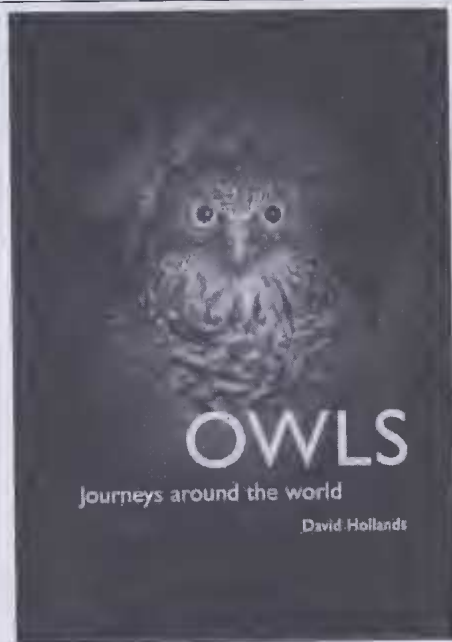
## Owls: Journeys Around the World

by David Hollands

Publisher: *Bloomings Books, Richmond, Vic*, 2004. 192 pages, hardback, illus.  
150 colour plates. RRP \$59.95

Owls by their very nature are cryptic species, which we regard with a special sense of mystery and awe. Their presence is extremely difficult to determine; their behaviour even more difficult to predict. Tracking down owls is challenging enough, but taking photographs of the quality displayed in this book is truly admirable. David Hollands has excelled himself with this publication, producing another outstanding owl book with qualities equal to those shown in his previous owl book *Birds of the Night* (Reed Books: Sydney 1991).

Through this book, David takes us on a journey of passion, providing the reader with personal accounts and outstanding photographs of twenty-one owl species from six continents. David's passion and determination is obvious from the very beginning. His detailed and accurate account of the different owl species is



superb and his personal touches make this book a pleasure to read, both for the scientist and the lay person. I especially enjoyed reading about David's trials and tribulations, particularly in relation to Alaska's Snowy Owl: the photographs and information provided on this species is a testament to David's sheer commitment.

The final owl that David describes in detail in this book is Australia's largest, the Powerful Owl. This species is very close to my heart and I thoroughly enjoyed (and related) to David's accounts of it. I agree wholeheartedly that the Powerful

Owl 'does not give away its secrets readily'. Having worked on this species for many years myself I can fully appreciate David's frustrations and jubilations. The information that David has provided on this species is accurate and highlights the result of many long cold nights sitting in the bush. One thing we all know for certain is that all the waiting is definitely worthwhile, as is highlighted through David's photographs.

The book finishes with a section on the future. This is a very valuable section, as it highlights various threatening processes that owls are currently contending with.

David's predictions for the future are somewhat bleak, but hopefully through education and increased public awareness we can work together and begin to reverse this trend. Publications such as this one are certainly fantastic starting points with the photography and easy reading making it a book that everyone can enjoy and ultimately use to learn more about these amazing creatures.

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## Australia's Volcanoes

by Russell Ferrett

Publisher: *Reed New Holland, Sydney, 2005.*  
160 pages; paperback; colour photographs.  
ISBN 1877069094. RRP \$29.95

This attractive and handy-sized (and priced) book begins with a good clear index map on page 5, a map of areas of volcanic activity on page 9, and another map on page 16 showing a hotspot moving from north to south down the eastern side of Australia and ending at Macedon in central Victoria. Other maps support the descriptions of local areas.

The contents are:

1. The formation of volcanoes
2. Eruptions, tephra, lava and rocks
3. Landforms
4. Queensland
5. New South Wales
6. Victoria
7. South Australia, Tasmania, Western Australia and Heard Island.

A useful glossary, list of references, and a good index complete the book.

Russell Ferrett is a geography teacher who has visited many of the world's volcanoes, and not finding suitable information on Australian volcanoes, he 'decided to write his own book to address this gap in our knowledge and understanding'.

He discusses the past 40 million years of volcanic activity in Australia, concentrating on the clearest examples, and mainly



those from the Eastern Australian mainland. This means the young volcanoes of Queensland, NSW, Victoria and South Australia form a major part of the book. However the area now commonly known as the Newer Volcanic Province covering central and western Victoria, and SE South Australia, is not fully covered; there is a concentration on the Camperdown area, and on Tower Hill and Mt Eccles, and Mt Gambier in South Australia. Bill Birch's book is still the best guide for Victoria.

Descriptions of the earlier (older) Eastern Australia activity include the Glasshouse